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Dominique P. Béhague

Center for Medicine, Health & Society

Vanderbilt University Nashville, USA and Department of Global Health & Social Medicine
King's College London, London, UK (E-mail: Dominique.Behague@Vanderbilt.edu)

Kenneth MacLeish

Center for Medicine, Health & Society

Vanderbilt University Nashville, USA

The Global Psyche: Experiments in the Ethics and Politics of Mental Life

Across hemispheres, nations, and domains of social life, the language of psychiatry and mental health constitutes an increasingly universal frame for suffering while also expressing a human condition ever more liberated from and ever more alienated by medical knowledge. The use of psychiatric labels and discourses as tools of governance in the face of violence and disorder and as means of grievance and redress for social and political movements are not particularly new. But the present moment presents a particular density, ubiquity, and fluidity to both of these deployments. The affective dimensions of large-scale political projects, from humanitarianism to environmentalism, electoral processes to ever-expanding (self-) surveillance practices, rest on objectifying interior states and generating master narratives of collective stress (Masco 2017). Psychiatric symptoms and diagnostic categories become sites of threat, governance, care, resistance, mobilization, and knowledge creation in domains ranging from health care access, borders and immigration, police violence, nuclear conflict, and control and funding of scientific research to white nationalism, post-industrial precariousness, neoliberal managerialism, hate crime, and liberal apocalypticism. In the process, conceptions of mental life become sites of moral and political reckoning and ethical speculation and reconfiguration, birthing novel experiments in justice, rights, survival, personhood, and the good life.

The aim of this collection is to examine diverse incarnations of what might be called the *global psyche*. We combine these two over-general terms advisedly, with an eye to the multitudinous labors by which worldwide aspirations are produced or disavowed, an attention to the limits and possibilities of conceiving the psyche and the globe as stable points of reference, and an awareness of the novel forces—political, technological, neurobiological, ecological—that outpace and disrupt abiding interpretive frames. As anthropologists of the experience, objectification, regulation, and problematization of psychic life, we are committed to conversations—like those under the ambit of global mental health—about how practice and policy can best be calibrated to harmful forms of psychological distress confronting some

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of the world's most disadvantaged and vulnerable populations (Kirmayer and Pedersen 2014). But in this special issue, we are also concerned with questions about the scope, diversity, and contentiousness of claims regarding mental life that are not reducible solely to specific assemblages such as global mental health (Lovell et al. 2019), the globalization of American psychiatry, or transnational pharmaceuticalization (Ecks 2017). As these assemblages travel, transfigure, and settle in different settings, they interact with much broader systems of governance, inclusion/exclusion, identity making, and citizenship (Lovell 2013). What cultural and political work underlies the objectification of mental health at planetary scales and with universalist aspirations, and what novel epistemes and cultural projects are birthed in these diverse and particular applications? What experiments, across scales large and small, characterize contemporary life under incarnations of the "global" and the "mental" that seem both overdetermining and utterly upended? This collection explores these questions, and shows how these terms appear when they are not simply taken for granted as mutually constituting descriptors and objects of intervention, but hailed into existence, actively produced, struggled over, and made into sites of new possibility.

The terminological conjuncture *global psyche* is not the name of an entity we aim to reify. Rather, the articles that follow show it as an object whose diverse incarnations reward careful analysis—a space of necessary experiment in the ethics and politics of mental life. By the *global* in *global psyche*, we mean a scale and field of action called into being by institutions, authoritative practices, and historical and political processes that claim it as their ambit; this *global* nominally celebrates diversity, difference, and autonomy, but only as adjuncts to universalism, and it pushes for hypernormalization, technicization, and the geographical spread of psychiatric knowledge. Even as the *global* offers itself as an enlightened achievement, it remains constructed on histories of colonialism, dreams of ordered and bordered land and resources, and space–time selectively compressed or elided to serve, sequester, contain, or exploit various populations. Critics from Du Bois (2017) to Fanon (1963) to Said (1979) to Anzaldúa (2015) make clear the centrality of affective and psychic registers for critique of the violent hierarchies of gender, race, nation, and empire on which a seamless *global* is premised. Recent scholarship in Black and Indigenous studies highlights the ways that such hierarchies reproduce themselves within hegemonic modes of knowledge production, suggesting that the *global* is not so much a universal frame as a way of knowing that can only function via dispossession and exclusion (e.g., Davis and Todd 2017; Sharpe 2016; Yusoff 2018).

Even on their own terms, the institutions and practices that underpin the *global* are by no means coherent or unifying, and beneath the merest veneer of coherence, many *globals* work toward different and often conflicting visions of what the world should look like and what mental life should feel like. Knowledge flows and affective states move in multiple directions and give rise to problematics of scale, translation, commensuration, and friction (Tsing 2005). Global political and economic crises fuse with crises of institutional and epistemic authority and present the opportunity for emergent critics and political constellations—not only the Global South but all manner of social movements adopting the idioms of mental health—for which the *global* is a stage of challenge and contestation. The dynamism and plasticity of the nervous system and the epigenome and the radical uncertainty

of climate crisis destabilize the global as a heuristic or set of institutions while also suggesting the need for other forms of ethical obligation at a planetary scale—to the interconnectedness of life and threats to collective existence (Ticktin 2019).

We invoke the term *psyche* because of the polysemy that lurks beneath its superficial appeal to an all-encompassing register of mental life. Most recognizable is the *psyche* of the human sciences, the other to the body's *soma*, one half of the Cartesian dualism, and an outgrowth, as Stefan Ecks's commentary eloquently reviews, of value-free positivism in modern science. *Psyche* denotes the totality of human mind that is the purview of the discipline of psychology: the clinical and experimental construction of mental health and pathology, but also an episteme whose stability is threatened by increasingly dynamic genomes, nervous systems, and human environments. The "generosity" (Rose 1998) of the *psy-* disciplines ensures their promiscuous entanglement with diverse political and epistemic projects. These are not just problems of knowledge and politics, but of hope, desire, and transcendence. When subjected to anthropological critique, the *psyche* invites fundamental questions of "how to live" (Collier and Lakoff 2005) and of what kinds of worlds are worth building, even as it presents a subsuming language that, as Brotherton explores in this volume, merits cautious engagement. As Anne Lovell writes in the commentary of this special issue, *psyche* and the concrete practices and technologies of *psy* expertise animate one another: The "breath," "life," and "soul" conjured by the term's original Greek are what allow expertise to circulate and to persuade. In our present moment, the *psyche*'s destabilizing threat and inherent vulnerability lie at the heart of humanitarian crises (Ticktin 2017), politicized mandates of affective "uncalm" (Masco 2017), and states of geopolitical disorder (DelVecchio Good et al. 2008) that animate technoscientific categories and render them eminently portable. *Psyche* mixes up time and causality as it is framed as both cause and effect of events; it is the object of progressively accreting knowledge that it regularly manages to undo; its developing and diseased states define the normative or pathological lifespan; it is invested with hope, improvement, and fear; it is the venue for crisis, aftermath, haunting pasts, terrifying futures, and everyday dis-eases at once intimate and public (Cvetkovich 2012). *Psyche*'s entailments of humanity and divinity, science and sacredness, cognition and affect, interior self and expert authority offer a welter of structured oppositions and mutually imbricated registers.

The articles that follow take up strands of global proportions—environmental destruction (Lock); war, state-engineered violence, and fragile democracies (Chua, Kienzler, Brotherton); forced migration and displacement (Giordano); and dementia in aging populations (Kitanaka)—where the *psyche*'s encompassing ambit takes shape through emotional, psychological, and affective registers. In the remainder of this introduction, we give an overview of this work and discuss three broad critical impulses that the articles follow individually and in relation to one another. First, they give primacy to psychiatric and biomedical expertise but ask after both the possibilities and limits of these forms when they are placed into transnational and planetary scales. Second, they follow logics of the global *psyche* as it enters, transforms, and is transformed by locally and nationally defined worlds in which individual mental existence meets the precarious affects and life-and-death stakes of globalized forms of politics. Drawing their critical insight from the patients, families, and clinicians who are their ethnographic interlocutors, these works reveal

a self-consciously medicalized psyche as a key site of mental and intimate life. Finally, this collection departs from the hermeneutics of suspicion underlying much medicalization scholarship to ask what other modes of critique might be possible and useful (e.g., Fitzgerald and Callard 2015; Rose 2013). Eschewing “diagnostic” positioning and revelations of false consciousness, the articles explore practices of creativity, refusal, and the embrace of uncertainty. These introductory notes end with some thoughts that, following Eve Sedgwick’s critique of “paranoid theory” (2003), as what “reparative” ethnographic engagements with the global psyche might look like.

Decentering Psy- Expertise

Medical anthropology so often takes its cues from medical interests and questions, an impulse that even at its most critical can reify diagnoses and clinical spaces as privileged starting points or analytical horizons. The critique of the global psyche articulated in these articles asks, what becomes visible when approaching psy- practices and knowledge from different starting points? The how and why of psy- hegemony neither begins nor ends with questions of diagnosis, labeling, reductionism, context, stigma, and outcomes. The range of domains opened up by the articles—from fraught, local scenes of post-conflict recovery (Kienzler) to the machinic assemblage producing the U.S.’s Global War on Terror (Chua) to the scalable affects of migration crises (Giordano), and from the individualized and intimate psy- practices haunted by terror (Brotherton) and constantly revised by medicine’s own shifting terrain (Kitanaka) to the planetary and cellular scopes of anthropogenic environmental harm (Lock)—forces an accounting with the multiplicities and contingencies of the psyche’s diverse forms of power.

Margaret Lock’s article demands that we recognize the most dramatic stakes of the psyche’s epistemic and institutional contexts. Humanity itself—and the selfhood enshrined in the psyche’s material homes of brain and body—is increasingly undone by anthropogenic effects ricocheting back onto the most vulnerable from poisoned environments (Lock 2018). Lock’s in-depth look at the rapidly changing field of environmental epigenetics in the context of the Anthropocene situates epigenetics as both a “gateway for a paradigm shift in molecular biology” and tool of politics and accountability that can render environmental destruction and its effects on human life visible. Reviewing a vast array of literature in the biological and social sciences, Lock underscores core political and epistemological questions raised by the embodiment of violence and trauma, the intensity of the association between deep chronic poverty and neuro-functioning, and the epigenetic effects of neurotoxins, under-nutrition, and in-utero stress on child and adult health and intergenerational aftermaths. Epigenetic mechanisms call out histories of racism, inequity, neglect, and empire that are entwined with settler-colonial dominance and destruction of the earth. The very concept of the Anthropocene, Lock argues, indicates a degree of collective awareness about human capacity for action, ability to imagine different possible futures, and “the allocation of responsibility and for the possibility of initiating social and political change.”

Though Lock writes of the need for an “epigenetics in action,” she also charts the challenges of such action, providing us with a long list of examples of how

such evidence is ignored, discredited, or actively opposed, even as the science becomes ever more nuanced, complex, and substantiated. To be sure, there are highly divergent views on whether humanity has indeed reached the point of no return. Even among those who agree that climate change and deaths due to environmental toxins are real, complex cost–benefit assessments are often mobilized to justify that certain risks are worth taking—logics that also justify maintaining the status quo. Within the community of professionals who research epigenetic mechanisms, there is a tendency, as Lock writes, to “miniaturize” the policy implications of epigenetic findings. Ultimately, only those variables that can achieve standardization and are deemed “modifiable” receive attention, scaling the policy implications and locus of action of epigenetic logics down to a pregnant woman’s uterus and “health behaviors.” Lock addresses the “minute” molecular intimacy of the Anthropocene’s harms that some feminist commentators see as the basis for sustainable and hopeful micropolitics of everyday life (Braidotti 2006), but this piece looks with others (Liboiron et al. 2018) to the other kinds of politics that may be required, frames of reference that not only go beyond individual bodies and behaviors, but beyond the state and other existing political orders.

Picking up on similar problems of scale and frame, Jocelyn Chua’s article describes one of the biopolitical landscapes mystified and made possible by the diversion tactics that Lock describes. The neurobiological objectification and miniaturization of the psyche enable new forms of global movement and circulation through the management of pharmaceuticals and their human subjects in the U.S.’s post-9/11 wars. Chua describes how vast increases in psychotropic drug use among American civilians have driven a significant shift in military policy: Whereas psychopharmaceuticals were once constrained to select homefront clinical applications, with their use marking soldiers as unfit for the normal duties of an idealized military subject, drugs now enter the war zone in the bodies of already medicated soldiers, especially those in the Reserve and National Guard components of the military, and must be maintained in those bodies at the front lines. Medications once seen as primarily treatments for war afflictions (PTSD and its adjacent depressive, anxiety, and substance use conditions) and tools to return soldiers to duty are now necessary for many soldiers’ normal functioning while deployed. Chua illuminates not just changes in use, but the “spatial creep” of drugs into new military bodies and new spaces of global war-making. The military’s response entails a “politics of sorting” that, via the movement of drugs and concomitant anxieties of infiltration and smuggling, differentiates civilian and homefront spaces from the war zone and an “overmedicated civilian world saturated with quick-fix pills” from “a pristine military-corporate body”—a neurotic displacement that reveals the military itself as a “nervous system” (MacLeish 2014; Taussig 1992) while also reproducing the ideological distinction between soldier and civilian, war and home within individualized military psyches. With its connotations of civilian-originated ills, spatial creep projects military pharmaceuticalization onto a scapegoat outside the military.

Chua shows that this mobilization of drugs is, in fact, rooted in the scale and open-endedness of U.S. war-making itself, which has demanded the lengthy and repeated deployment of an unprecedented number of soldiers, including non-Active Duty servicemembers. Drugs play a crucial role in keeping soldiers “mission capable” across multiple deployments and enabling them to withstand

new conditions of urban counterinsurgency warfare. The management of the military psyche through circulating pills that follow circulating bodies reveal psychopharmaceuticals as “technologies that must be harnessed to projects of US empire.” So, even as the soldier’s psyche is “globalized” through its implication in U.S. militarism (Howell 2013; Jauregui 2015), its rootless portability allows it to be moved, physically and narratively, to different sites of blame, harm, and responsibility across the warscape (Nordstrom 1997; Terry 2017). Chua thus reveals the ethical and affective contradictions that arise from the collision of two large-scale global flows—pharmaceutical and military. The latter casts the former as a moral and practical threat while relying on it as a necessary tool. As a globalized object of governance and intervention, the pharmaceuticalized military psyche is compared unfavorably to an imagined purer, healthier past incarnation, while in the present it is reduced to a site of instrumentality.

Beyond Medicalization

If Lock’s and Chua’s contributions make clear the importance of decentering the psyche and recognizing its production at institutional, environmental, and global scales, Hanna Kienzler’s and Sean Brotherton’s contributions reveal another valence of the limits of medicalization. They describe settings in which the psyche, precisely through the ways it is intervened upon, destabilizes distinctions between expert and lay perspective. In an effort to align therapeutic practice and reasoning with the complex politics and histories confronting them, clinicians and psy- experts turn to social science theory and “critique” while their patients and interlocutors dismiss clinical language or claim it for their own. As Brotherton and Kienzler both remind us, the psyche is a discursive product: a testimonial referent, a grammar, and a set of labels “that act,” to borrow the characterizations from Freud, Lacan, and Kristeva, respectively, that Brotherton cites. Anthropological inquiry must reckon with the fact that the global psyche cannot be understood only through the usual frame of the battle between medicalization and its discontents, experts and patients, and the colonizing reach of disciplines and the insurgencies beating them back, or the tensions between conceptual approaches focused on social suffering and those keyed to emergent forms of life (Cohen 2012; Lock and Nguyen 2010; Rose 2007). The psyche is animated and produced by the intimate and globalized circulation of terminology, labels, and discourses, but these regimes are themselves animated and freighted with material and human consequences. In the face of urgent problems, all this unmasking may, as some have suggested, undermine meaningful ground for action and stoke conspiratorial thinking and claims of “fake news” (Latour 2004). As go-to approaches like historicization and deconstruction are increasingly incorporated into lay and expert uses of the psyche—when “they” have incorporated “our” tools into the world anthropologists seek to analyze—the value and significance of anthropological analysis is called into question more generally. These articles emphasize the importance, noted by Didier Fassin (2017), of attending to how terms circulate in normative and critical ways across lay and expert domains and in and out of the anthropologist’s own interventions.

A tension between formal institutional narratives and ground-level exigency—and the resultant ethical conundrums that this tension generates—pervades

Kienzler's article on the double-binds confronting Kosovar mental health providers in their everyday clinical work with survivors of civil conflict. Kienzler's article seeks to nuance conventional understandings of psychiatric work, beginning with the adoption and use of standardized diagnostic procedures and proceeding to the determination and execution of treatment protocols. In the complex terrain that providers must navigate and the underresourced services in which they work, Kienzler's interlocutors are profoundly aware that "trauma-" oriented models, standard diagnostics, and biomedical therapeutics do not begin to do justice to the enduring forms of precarity and economic and gender violence that their patients, particularly women, endured. Yet, despite their acute sense of the limitations of globally endorsed evidence-based guidelines, these are the very models that providers ultimately worked to reproduce.

Kienzler explores the complex mechanisms through which this happens, showing that providers push toward the "making of patients": type-casting the afflicted into ready-made "subjectivations" that facilitate diagnosis, fitting patients into the trauma model and its available treatment options. Providers do this despite their awareness of the poor fit, in part because of their own prejudices and structural power, but also as an ethical response to the materially untenable conditions that they and their patients are confronting. Kienzler confirms other scholars' findings that objectifying the psyche through standardized protocols constrains deep therapeutic insight and creative clinical work and frequently reproduces ground-level inequalities and divisions (Abramowitz 2010; Fassin and Rechtman 2009; Friedman-Peleg and Goodman 2010). Benignly apolitical and universally actionable, such guidelines can, in practice, leave those working on the ground with little more than a thin patchwork of therapeutic possibilities. Kienzler's interlocutors are as keenly aware of this dilemma as any critical anthropologist, yet it remains unclear how this reflexivity serves them and what the effects of their critical insights might be in either the clinic or the everyday.

Debates surrounding the limits of medicalization theory index a larger set of questions for the fields of anthropology and sociology of science. Scholars of science such as Nikolas Rose propose rethinking the centrality of epistemes and the discursive (Rose and Miller 1992). Jasanoff argues for a shift in focus away from how knowledge production constructs subjectivity and "truths" and toward how expertise is co-constructed with contemporary clinical, social, pedagogic, and economic practices and values (Jasanoff 2012). Ian Hacking, though deeply inspired by Foucault, has called attention to a particular Anglophone reading that overemphasizes the epistemic realm of concepts; in one of his earlier works, Hacking wrote that he explicitly avoided using the term "discourse" for its tendency to shift researchers' attention to language over and above "what people do, how they live, [and] the larger world of the material existence they inhabit" (Hacking 1998, 86). An emphasis on the discursive sometimes directs attention to the institutionalized epistemic powers that drive expertise over and above the contingent conditions that animate, invite, consolidate, and distribute discourse. The resulting analyses, according to Andrew Kipnis, may be "far removed from actual practices of governing, obscuring the very objects ethnography should be illuminating" (Kipnis 2008, 277). Similarly, Kaushik Sunder Rajan and Sabina Leonelli have called attention to the limitations of Foucault's "power-knowledge" nexus, arguing

instead for a consideration of how knowledge gains value not merely through truth-claims but through mobility, “as different communities select and attribute meaning to various knowledge forms through a complex nexus of commitments, frames and material engagements with the world” (Rajan and Leonelli 2013, 466). Taken together, these theorists’ useful provocations suggest that “regimes of truth” are less “regime oriented” than they are embellishments, tools, practices, and experimentations that persuade not only through knowledge production but also through the contingent qualities of quotidian life: connection, affect, value, worth.

The question of how epistemes of the psyche come to persuade in highly contingent, quotidian, and diverse ways is taken up with considerable acuity in Brotherton’s article. In the Anglophone contexts of the United States and the United Kingdom, psychoanalysis has traditionally been understood as a complement to the critique of medicalization—by definition, an anti-reductionist episteme (Hale 1995). Yet, as scholars have shown, psychoanalysis is an intensely plural and plastic field that has unfolded in quite distinct ways throughout its diasporic cultural history, at times laying the groundwork for bio-behaviorist approaches to psychopathology (Ellenberger 1970; Plotkin 2001). Neither intellectual history nor philosophy is sufficient to account for this variability, and this is where Brotherton’s anthropological sensibilities prove particularly fruitful. His article explores the contingent landscape of Argentinian Lacanian psychoanalysis, the social and political ecologies that have produced “an ensemble of institutions, procedures, methods, and practices for constructing the psychoanalytic subject and, through this, psychic life as an actionable site of intervention, dislocation and struggle.” In so doing, he turns the ethnographic lens onto the practice of psychoanalysis to explore how professionals and laypeople develop diverse notions of being well—what Brotherton terms a “grammar of well-being.” What is being “diagnosed,” he shows, are not just individual forms of suffering linked to traumatic pasts, but collective forms of lament and *auto-consciência*, or self-awareness.

Brotherton’s psychiatrist interlocutors grapple with the idea that Argentinians are invested in forgetting their political past, a form of self-preservation through repression of memories and a seemingly willing economic fantasy that some analysts link to the financial collapse of the early 2000s. They struggle also with maintaining a form of psychoanalytic practice that considers the dynamic embedding of the psyche in history. And while patients sometimes want fixed endpoints and try other options such as medication and cognitive behavioral therapy, psychoanalysis ultimately remains vibrant precisely because it keeps a grip on “root causes”—political and economic ones. In this account, the psyche emerges as a flexible way of thinking and becoming, not hermetically sealed off from or doggedly rooted in past experience, as long-standing critiques of psychoanalysis would have it. Brotherton treads a fine line, approaching psychoanalysis as both an object of analysis and, in its contingent form, a malleable source of epistemic inspiration for anthropology. The grammars of well-being he and his interlocutors explore might prove analytically useful as a “way of interpreting relationships between mind, body, and society,” a register that is at once personal, social, economic and political. Drawing on Lauren Berlant’s (2006) work, Brotherton asks: If relations of “cruel optimism” take hold where “what you desire [becomes] an obstacle to your flourishing,” can “psychoanalysis can be mobilized as a tool to work against such relationships?” To approach psychoanalysis

as Brotherton does, outside the purview of the black-and-white framings often proposed by medicalization theory, reveals a far more complex picture of what psychoanalysis is and does, and of what is at stake when people engage with and transform it.

What Modes of Critique?

Through the lived struggles of ethnographic interlocutors and the struggle of ethnographic analysis itself, the articles in this issue compel us to ask: What modes of critique are at play in everyday life, what effects do critiques and reflexive practices have on the ground, and how might anthropologists and humanities scholars want to practice critique a bit differently? Brotherton, who not only engages his “subjects of analysis” as interlocutors but allows their therapeutic episteme to revise his critical ethnographic one, shows one possibility, and the dialogs and dissents in the last two articles, by Cristiana Giordano and Junko Kitanaka, reveal others.

The task of ethnography as critique is not merely to make sense of the “truth” of other ways of life, but to interrogate with one’s interlocutors how it is that those truths are produced (Fassin 2017). This is critique of the sort defined by Foucault as the “insubordination” and “intractability” that push back against normalization: “the movement by which the subject gives [themselves] the right to question truth on its effects of power and question power on its discourses of truth” (Foucault 2007, 47). What careful ethnographic attention to such “intractability” shows is not the overthrow of dominant regimes, but the situated and reflexive awareness of their limits and the practicalities and novel adaptations of forms of life emergent within them.

Thinking with and against this impulse from Foucault, the authors in this special issue indicate a desire to move beyond a conventional hermeneutics of suspicion. Instead, they adeptly tackle questions of power while grappling with the limitations and problems set up by “paranoid” (Sedgwick 2003) and “suspicious” (Felski 2015) readings. As Sedgwick argues, in social theory, a hermeneutics of suspicion has become a “mandatory injunction rather than possibility” among other options; “entirely coextensive with critical theoretical inquiry” rather than one kind of theoretical practice among others (Sedgwick 2003, 125–26). The premise that the intertwined powers of ideology, technology, capital, and expertise have created conditions not only of oppressive constraint but of individual and collective self-deception justifies the “diagnostic” work of social theorists, provides a locus of intervention, and offers the appealing promise of world-changing revelations (Guess 1981). A hermeneutics of suspicion places high hopes on the deconstruction, exposure, and demystification of knowledge. But “that a fully initiated listener could still remain indifferent or inimical, or might have no help to offer, is hardly treated as a possibility” (Sedgwick 2003, 125–26).

While suspicious positions might be good at describing the grips of power, they tend toward polarizing views of how systems of oppression might be disrupted or altered. “Resistance” becomes the primary presumed medium of such disruption. But resistance comes with its own risks of over-determination; it too has its own histories and contingencies that need to be taken not as a de facto position of hermeneutic superiority but a social phenomenon to be explored in its own right

(Appadurai 2016; Béhague 2019; Escobar 1992; Seymour 2006). As anthropologists have engaged with this question, other more hopeful and generative ways of understanding and writing about disruptions of power have sprung up—refusal (Simpson 2014), abandonment and asocial endurance (Povinelli 2011; Wool and Livingston 2017), design (Murphy 2016), affect (Cooper 2018; Masco 2014; Stewart 2007), and becoming (Biehl and Locke 2017) are examples of aesthetics, even moods, that depart from the bifurcations that analyses of hegemony and resistance so often set up.

Giordano's piece, a consideration of the role of art and theater in the lives of young migrants arriving in Siracusa, Sicily, captures such aesthetics beautifully. Her broader project explores the interruption of what she and others have called a *grammar of crises* central to the modalities of sovereign power in which certain events and forms of life are deemed worthy of attention only within a predetermined rubric of accounting. This grammar, Giordano explains, shapes subjects through its adjudicating categories—the illegal migrant, the refugee—and the disciplinary practices needed for the management of people made to fit such categories. What falls outside the grammar of crisis belongs to the realm of the unsayable and untranslatable, thus exceeding the very syntax that makes certain objects and actions recognizable. Giordano's article looks carefully at how some young migrant artists engage in practices that interrupt this grammar by existing purposefully outside the register of the eventful. Her key interlocutor, Victor, a young Nigerian refugee and a gifted painter with the nom d'art of Homiex, decides to not sell his paintings to visitors. He refuses to participate in what other artists know as the "academic and humanitarian tourism" that has become a great resource for the island; he refuses to re-inhabit the category of the "migrant" and depict his horrific experiences with "the crossing." Victor's refusal is decidedly quiet, not a form of resistance per se but simply a Bartlebian "I'd prefer not to." Giordano suggests that Victor's position opens up the possibility of other subject positions, experiences, and actualities; as he wanders in a space between categories and statuses, he frees identification from pre-determined onto-political classifications. A different form of becoming unfolds, dream-like connections and images that bear witness to a diffuse and generalized affect, exceeding the narrow logic of crisis and crisis' tendency toward repetition of the same. Giordano considers Victor's response to be a kind of "therapeutic"—an "ethics of creation, a disposition toward experience that allows for exploration and for different worldings to occur" through which "the biopolitical order is temporarily suspended."

Giordano writes in tension with the legal system that adjudicates over crime and migration status, but her article raises the question of how grammars of crisis are at play in anthropological and social science approaches more generally. On some level, it is these very grammars that may be feeding a romanticized and bifurcating view of resistance, "the local," and "contingency" that is one cornerstone of the ethnographic endeavor. But a commitment to contingency need not equate with radical incommensurability; a deep dive into difference and alterity need not forego critical engagement with planetary collectives. How to explore such commitments without tripping into claims of universality? What might a form of critique look like when it is detached from the presumption that accounting for local particularities and contingencies is a means to a pre-defined end? Giordano shows us how a

globalized scope so often merely reproduces provincialized universalisms (like human rights discourses) that are ultimately the tools of violent power relations (like biopolitical racism). Bare life (and its sentimentalized spectacle) is not enough to hang global communion on, especially when it is not equally distributed. And yet the scale of her questioning, as is the case with all the articles, is by no means concerned with studying the local as a kind of vanguard of a more “authentic” politics.

Kitanaka’s article is an exemplary and nuanced steer through this very terrain. Her article describes the rise of the *tojisha* dementia movement in Japan, with its varied and often intensely divergent meanings and modes of traction. While the movement can be described in part as a reclaiming of the stigmatizing label “dementia,” it is also distinct by virtue of the sheer magnitude of dementia, a condition that is affecting, and will affect, a growing portion of Japanese as populations live longer. The scale of the changes looming ahead for virtually all Japanese, from *tojishas* themselves to their families, doctors, and other care-givers, is unprecedented, and the sense of impending social disorder intense. Biological life pushes back on even the most intimate relationships and stable institutions. Even in a setting with engaged family members, access to care, and abundant resources, the dynamics of dementia are perpetually revised and outrun by experts and patients alike. Kitanaka documents a certain fury among families who seem to take up mandatory “screen and intervene” initiatives with little opposition, with enthusiasm even, adopting what some critics might claim is a form of magical thinking about medical technologies and neuroscience, since no cure or prevention actually exists.

Yet Kitanaka approaches the conundrums and struggles created by this changing existential and technological landscape not in terms of medicalized bio-reductions battling with contextualized sociality. Rather, she considers questions of incommensurability and empathy within the full range of ways neuro-framings interject in *tojisha* life, at times cultivating practices that are stigmatizing and othering and that make *tojisha* incomprehensible, while at other times enabling doctors and caregivers to better empathize with *tojishas* and reduce othering. Neuroscience, its technological revelation, and its phenomenological conjuring *can at times* enable compassion and reduce incommensurability, engendering what Kitanaka calls “neurobiological empathy.” The brain becomes familiar, and dementia begins to feel ordinary, not frightening.

Beyond exploring how Japanese patients, families, and clinicians grapple with dementia and the production of knowledge, Kitanaka’s analysis digs into underlying ethical and existential struggles surrounding empathy, insight, othering, commensurability, surveillance and technology, and changing parameters of how the “social” and “societal” are framed and made. As she follows the trails of her interlocutors’ *commensurating* desires and practices, she opens up a theme that bypasses issues of commensurability and interiority altogether—what she identifies of the “ecological self.” Here dementia’s cognitive limits become the grounds for a different kind of experiment altogether in which the question of commensurability and incommensurability recedes into the background. The self is no longer a bounded, closed-off entity with an individual brain amenable to comparison; it is made of constant interactions between mind and environment; it is inextricably collective.

Toward Reparative Ethnographies

Global psyches and the psyche's various globals are contemporary ethnographic objects par excellence: They are not so much exotic as they are "fully understood by no one"—outsider, "native" psy-expert, social critic—and "that all are in search of puzzling out" (Marcus and Fischer 1999, xvii). If the global psyche is the space in which angst-ridden puzzles are unfolding, then investigating the production of that space, rather than simply reproducing grammars of crisis or analyzing such grammars through a hermeneutics of suspicion, is crucial to understanding the harm, change, help, progress, and destruction said to be taking place there (Fitzgerald et al. 2016). Our contributors point to forms of interruption, disidentification, deferral, refusal, and therapeutic aesthetics that push at the boundary of this space and suggest new ethical possibilities along the way (Lambek 2010). The lack of therapeutic closure is an underlying current in this collection, a lack that points to other forces at work (Chua, Lock, Giordano), the intractability of neurobiology (Kitanaka), or the nature of the intervention itself (Brotherton). The psyche appears as unfinished, in progress, contingent, in danger of expiration, or an emergent form that welcomes new approaches. We have much to learn from the experimental positions taken by the authors' various interlocutors: Japanese families' and professionals' existential struggles over the othering and incommensurability of aging (Kitanaka); Kosovar mental health providers reluctant and reflexive modes of classifying survivors of civil conflict (Kienzler); a Nigerian painter's experimental therapeutic ethics and politics of a "minor logos" in a sea of humanitarian discourses and technologies (Giordano); Argentinian analysts' and analysts' attempts to construct a platform for the political to take grammatical form (Brotherton); the contradictory "spatial creep" that raises ethical and affective contradictions for military management (Chua); epigeneticists and social theorists creating new epistemologies to call for environmental action and, together with Indigenous activists, drawing attention to the violent legacy and present of settler colonialism (Lock). When anthropologists look over these experts' shoulders, what do they see in the spaces their interlocutors carve out, spaces that erupt in between attempts to understand, control, or emancipate (Ecks, this issue)? Ecks argues that Classical Greek notion of a global psyche failed to be "obstacle enough" to technoscientific overreach. A response to this apparent impasse may be to ask, what reparative moods or imaginaries, other than those that have "no sane outside to turn to" (Ecks), emerge from the perspectives offered by decolonial or anti-imperial projects; non-liberal modes of care and self-expression; novel formations of intimacy, attachment, and kin; and struggles for the protection of human and non-human life and more-than-human forms of sovereignty and community? On these front lines of our expert interlocutors' lives, problems, inspirations, and creativity take shape iteratively, at times even inextricably, at multiple affective, moral, and social scales. While the global psyche offers a frame that is analytically risky and perhaps vulnerable to abuse, it also reaches within and past the state, within and past institutionalized global initiatives; it reaches to the planetary and the collective to find its units of analysis and mobilization and to explore how the threats, frictions, and vulnerabilities it conjures might inspire a different kind of politics altogether.

How then might reparative ethnographies inspired by epistemologies that sit in tension with a hermeneutics of suspicion be better equipped to explore the possibilities of this emergent politics? What would such an approach look and feel like? What new moods and aesthetics might a non-suspicious critique engage (Felski 2015)? As a crucial starting point, Sedgwick argues that “to practice other than paranoid forms of knowing does *not*, in itself, entail a denial of the reality or gravity of enmity or oppression” (Sedgwick 2003, 128). That reparative approaches might not take power, oppression, and violence seriously enough is a valid and important concern (Ortega 2018). At the same time, by interpreting experiments in emancipation as (nearly always or even necessarily) folding into systems of power, ideology, and wealth, do we not risk skewing our interpretations toward overarching trends at the expense of studying the potentiality of exceptions to these trends, no matter how incipient or on the margins? In addition to being more attentive to these emergent spaces, a reparative approach could turn the ethnographic lens—that deep first-person and contextualized form of understanding—toward forces of oppression and division in ways that explain these not only in reference to ignorance, greed, will to power, maleficence, neoliberalism, or *isms* writ large. They could resist the urge to leave the text at the level of social and political “diagnosis” to more fully situate and theorize therapeutics-as-ethics (Giordano), creative strategies of refusal (Adams et al. 2009), feminist and indigeneous political ontologies (Anzaldúa 2015), Freirian approaches to shifting the social through iterations of critical awareness and praxis (Freire 1994), or experiments in decoloniality (Escobar 2011). In so doing, reparative approaches might be better equipped to approach collectivizing experiments, in small, local, regional spaces and on multiple global registers, without falling into the traps of reductionism, false consciousness, the erasure of diversity, amplifying polarizations, or unattainable utopic imaginations.

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